

## THE BOER PLEA REJECTED

England Declines to Accept Kruger's Peace Proposals.

Impossible to Grant the Claim for South African Independence—Premier Salisbury Presents the Matter to the House of Lords—Oom Paul Explains Why the Republics Begun the War Against Great Britain—Exempted by a Desire to Protect Their Liberties—The Text of the Note Given Out in London. The Government's Official Reply.

LONDON, March 12.—In the House of Lords today Lord Salisbury, in laying upon the table President Kruger's telegram containing overtures for peace, said that the Presidents of the Transvaal and Orange Free State had made acknowledgment of their independence an essential condition.

The answer of Her Majesty's Government, Lord Salisbury said, was that, in view of the use to which the Republics had put the powers given to them, it (the British Government) was not prepared to assent to the independence either of the South African Republic or the Orange Free State.

The following is the full text of the peace proposals which President Kruger and Steyn sent to Lord Salisbury, under date of Bloemfontein, March 5:

"The blood and the tears of the thousands who have suffered in this war, and the prospects of the moral and economic ruin with which South Africa is now threatened, make it necessary for both belligerents to seek themselves, dispassionately and in the sight of the true God, for what they are fighting, and whether the aim of such justifies all the appalling misery and devastation."

"With this object, and in view of the assertions of various British statesmen to the effect that this war was begun and is being carried out for the set purpose of undermining Her Majesty's authority in South Africa, and to set up an administration in the South African Republic independent of Her Majesty's Government, we consider it our duty to solemnly declare that the war was undertaken solely as a defensive measure to safeguard the threatened independence of the South African Republic and is only continued in order to secure and safeguard the inevitable destiny of both Republics as sovereign national states, and to obtain the assurance that those of Her Majesty's subjects who have taken part in this war shall suffer no harm whatever in person or in property."

"On these conditions, and on these conditions alone, we are now, as in the past, desirous of seeing peace restored in the South African Republic, and of putting an end to the evils now reigning over South Africa."

"While Her Majesty's Government is determined to destroy the independence of the Republics there is nothing left to us and our people but to persevere in the course already pursued."

"In spite of the overwhelming preponderance of the British Empire we are confident that the God who lighted the inextinguishable fire of love of freedom in the hearts of the British Empire, and of putting an end to the evils now reigning over South Africa."

"We have indicated to make this declaration earlier. Your Excellency, as we feared that as long as the advantage was on our side and as long as our forces held the Republics, our fathers will not forsake us, but will accomplish his work in us and in our descendants."

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## CLOSE TO BLOEMFONTEIN

General French About to Enter the Free State Capital.

He Reports to Roberts His Occupation of Two Hills Commanding the Town—Cavalry and Mounted Infantry Sent to His Assistance—The Advance of the British Field Marshal Again Unopposed—President Steyn's Brother a Prisoner—Scripps' Wounds Made by the Boers' Expanding Bullets—A List of English Casualties Sent to London.

REPORTS FROM MAKEKING.

Colonel Plummer Apparently Within Three Days of the Town.

LONDON, March 12.—Colonel Plummer, who is marching to the relief of Makek, is apparently within three days of that town. A Makek despatch, of March 1, was forwarded, via Plummer's camp, on March 4.

A despatch of the "Times," from Makek, dated March 5, says: "The garrison is feeling acutely the stress of the siege. We have been reduced to a diet of horse flesh and bread made from horse forage. The water is no longer free from contamination. Malaria, dysentery, and diphtheria are epidemic. It is impossible to isolate the fever cases. The sufferings of the women and the children are terrible. There are deaths in the women's laager daily, owing to fevers which are caused by inefficient sanitation. Patients are starting."

The military operations have been favorably sustained toward the Bricks Fields, from which the enemy have been expelled."

Julius Weil has received a cablegram from Makek, dated March 9, which says: "All well at Makek on March 9. The town is still besieged. As Makek is 15 miles north of Makek it looks as if Colonel Plummer's relief force was at the former place on March 9."

BRADFORD, England, March 12.—Mr. Thomas Whitley has received the following cablegram from the Boers: "Bulawayo, March 3.—All well—Frank."

From this it is thought that some way has been found to move the civilians from Makek. It is more probable, however, that the mayor has succeeded in getting away."

GATACRE AT BETHULIE.

He Saves a Wagon Bridge by Artillery Fire.

BURGHERSDORP, March 12.—General Gatacre arrived at Bethulie too late to prevent the Boers from destroying the railway bridge. He found the burghers preparing to destroy the wagon bridge which is located about a quarter of a mile west of the railway bridge.

After an artillery duel which lasted till sundown the Boers were driven off. The British loss was two wounded.

MASHONA ORDERED RELEASED.

Part of the Cargo of American Foodstuffs Confiscated.

CAPE TOWN, March 12.—The Supreme Court has rendered judgment in the case of the seized steamship Mashona, which was bound to Delagoa Bay with a cargo of American foodstuffs.

The judgment condemns a portion of the cargo, principally flour, the court ordered that the vessel should be released.

CRONJE SENDS FOR STOWE.

The American Consul at Cape Town Visits the Boer General.

CAPE TOWN, March 12.—At the request of General Cronje, the Boer commander, who is now a prisoner on the British flag ship Doris, James G. Stowe, the American Consul here, visited him and conferred with him through an interpreter. General Cronje expressed himself as satisfied with his treatment.

Mr. Stowe subsequently visited the prisoners' camp ashore and was shown where the Boers had made a tunnel twenty-five miles long with iron pipes and cups, and the earth which they had excavated was hidden in bags. If they had dug twelve yards more they could have escaped, but one of the prisoners betrayed them.

A PROTEST FROM REDMOND.

Dublin's Proposed Address to the Queen Cited Hypocrites.

DUBLIN, March 12.—The Town Clerk has summoned a meeting of the Corporation to be held tomorrow to decide on proposals for a reception to the Queen during her forthcoming visit to Ireland. William Redmond has sent a reply, in which he states that he will not attend the meeting and strongly protests against a suggestion that an address of welcome shall be presented to the Queen by the City of Dublin. He states that any such action taken by the Corporation would be a mockery of national feeling. The record of the Corporation's conduct in the past is a disgrace to Ireland, and to pretend that the Irish race is prepared to welcome Her Majesty officially is little short of hypocrisy.

The Captured Military Attachés.

KIMBERLEY, March 12.—The Russian and Dutch military attachés with the Boer army at Poplar Grove, whose cart broke down near Oosfontein as they were accompanying the retreating army, and who were taken prisoner by the British, have arrived here. They say that the Boers moved so rapidly that it was impossible for their cart to keep up with them. General Roberts has prohibited the attachés from receiving the retreating army, except by way of Cape Town and Delagoa Bay.

Maibha Day in Makek.

LONDON, March 12.—A despatch to the "Times," from Makek dated February 24 says the successful completion of a new howitzer by the local arsenal will be celebrated on Maibha day, "which the Boers, we hope, will have good cause to remember." Another despatch dated February 26 says that two of the town guards were killed and the Boer garrison anticipated the Maibha day celebration with keen relish.

The Loan Subscription Closed.

LONDON, March 12.—The list of London subscriptions to the new £30,000,000 loan has been closed. The bonds are now quoted at 2 3/8 per cent per annum.

A Refusal to Mr. Chamberlain.

PARIS, March 12.—The French newspapers welcome the armament amendment in connection with the Hay-Pauncefote Treaty, holding that it is a diplomatic rebuff to Mr. Chamberlain, the British Colonial Secretary, and conclusive evidence that no Anglo-American alliance exists.

An English Politician Injured.

LONDON, March 12.—Mr. William O'Brien, the well-known Nationalist and former member of Parliament, was thrown from his horse near Westport yesterday. It is reported that he sustained severe internal injuries.

Norfolk & Washington Steamboat Co.

Delightful trips daily at 6:20 p. m. to Old Point Comfort, Newport News, Norfolk, and Virginia Beach. For schedule see page 2.

## THE KRUGER-STEYN NOTE.

Boer Presidents' Proposal Discussed by the Cabinet.

The Cabinet, at the meeting today, was made acquainted with the nature and extent of the proposals submitted by the Boer Presidents to Great Britain through the United States, but there is little prospect that an official statement on the subject will be issued, unless word comes to the President today that Ambassador Choate has presented the Kruger-Steyn note to the Foreign Office in London.

As he was leaving the Cabinet meeting, Secretary Hay said that he believed that nothing in the way of an official statement would be given out until word had come from London that the message from the Boer Governments had been presented. That information, he said, had not been received.

The Secretary declined to say whether the United States had tendered its good offices to Great Britain in acting as the official channel for the transmission of the Boer message, or to define the position of the United States in any way.

Government officials believe, it is said, that peace is now assured and that the United States will not encourage the Boers to bring it about. They say that the condition imposed by the Boer Presidents that they be granted absolute independence is unacceptable to Great Britain, and that the United States will not serve to prevent the negotiations toward an end of hostilities from proceeding as the Boer terms are tentative.